

Workforce Management Magazine: WORKPLACES IN THE FAST LANE OF COMMUTING

Technology companies are leading the way when it comes to giving employees an easier commute. Computer chip maker Intel, wireless technology firm Qualcomm and software giant Oracle topped the **list of the best workplaces for commuters from the Fortune 500 companies**, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced in October.

“By providing their employees with sensible, innovative commuting benefits, these Best Workplaces for Commuters are joining the national march toward energy security and a cleaner environment,” EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson said in a statement.

To qualify as a best workplace for commuters, employers must meet a number of tests. These include providing at least one “primary” commuter benefit, such as a significant telecommuting program, and at least three “supporting” commuter benefits, such as on-site daycare.

Oracle, which is based in Redwood Shores, California, tied for second with San Diego-based Qualcomm. More than 20 percent of Oracle's San Francisco Bay Area workforce uses alternative commute options, which include shuttles to local transit stations.

Programs such as telecommuting, discounted public transportation passes and van pools no doubt look even more attractive to employees these days given gas prices above \$2.50 per gallon. Palo Alto, California-based Hewlett-Packard, which ranked 16th on the list, says it saw new interest in its alternate commute programs with the higher gas prices in the past six months or so. At HP, 70 percent of U.S. employees have the flexibility to telecommute on a full time, regular or occasional basis.

“We view alternate commute programs as an employee benefit and a corporate responsibility,” Daryl Wilmeth, HP environmental program manager for the Americas, said in a statement. “Employees who use them tell us they feel healthier, and are more productive and less stressed at the job. That's a win for us.”